



News Release

February 2005

For immediate release

Contact:

Wayne Seipp (432) 729 – 4532 Ext. 3

Texas, Are You Ready?

Time for the 2005 Conservation Security Program

Balmorhea, Texas -- The Conservation Security Program (CSP), authorized by the 2002 Farm Bill and administered by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), rewards farmers and ranchers who implement conservation on America's working lands. CSP, now in its second year, is a voluntary program based on conservation accomplishments that recognizes the contributions of the best land stewards and encourages them to do more.

The Toyah Watershed, located in portions of Jeff Davis, Reeves, and Pecos counties in Texas, is one of the 202 watersheds nationally selected to offer the CSP in 2005. Of the 202 watersheds, 18 watersheds were chosen for CSP in Texas. The Toyah Watershed was selected because of a history of good land stewardship, excellent conservation partnership efforts, high-priority natural resource issues, and the availability of the necessary technical tools to implement the program.

According to Dr. Larry Butler, Texas State Conservationist, "USDA intends to offer a signup for CSP in February of 2005." The NRCS in the Toyah Watershed will hold informational meetings for farmers in the watershed to review eligibility requirements and the self-assessment tools that farmers use to determine their eligibility prior to scheduling office visits with NRCS. The meetings will be held on March 2nd at Balmorhea State Park located at Toyahvale, Texas. There will be two meetings on March 2nd for the convenience of those wishing to attend. The meetings will be held in the group meeting room, with the first meeting from 9:00-12:00 pm and the second meeting from 5:30 to 8:30 pm on the same day. For a meeting schedule, visit the Toyah Watershed website at www.tx.nrcs.usda.gov/csp or contact your local USDA Service Center for meeting dates, times and locations.

"Texas is fortunate to have the Toyah Watershed selected for participation in the CSP," says Butler. "Our producers, with the assistance of NRCS staff, will have an opportunity to get this program implemented within the watershed. Producers outside of the watershed have the opportunity to watch how the program progresses and prepare themselves for future CSP signups."

The CSP is a very competitive program. Producers will compete nationally for funding against the nation's best conservationists. Documentation of conservation activities, such as conservation plans and records or pest and nutrient management, will be required to support the application. Producers within the Toyah Watershed are encouraged to attend the watershed information meetings to learn if they meet the necessary eligibility requirements. The locations and times of these meetings will be made public in the near future.

Those producers outside of the watershed are encouraged to complete the self-assessment on-line when it becomes available. Completing the self-assessment now will provide a good idea of actions they may need to take to meet eligibility requirements in future years.

Please contact your local USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service office for more information. Marfa 432-729-4532 Balmorhea 432-375-2277 Pecos 432-445-3196

#